

Application No. 09/994,492
Amendment dated June 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2003

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

9
1317
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Claim 1 (currently amended): A ligament cutter, comprising:

a handle;

a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle; and

spacer means connected to said head for extending a spacing between a pair of

bones forming a joint and thereby tensioning a ligament joining said pair of bones, said blade recessed from said spacer means.

Claim 2 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 1, wherein said spacer means comprises a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers, said joint spacers having a thickness whereby said joint spacers are operable to extend a joint space between a femoral head and an acetabulum to thereby tension a ligamentum teres femoris.

Claim 3 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 2, wherein said thickness is about 31 millimeters.

Application No. 09/994,492
Amendment dated June 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2003

Claim 4 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 1, wherein said head has a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint.

Claim 5 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 4, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head.

Claim 6 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 4, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending from said head in a direction about 30° away from said radius of curvature toward a concave surface of said head.

Claim 7 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 1, wherein said blade is recessed from said spacer means.

Claim 8 (original): A ligament cutter, comprising:

a handle;

a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle; and

a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers, said joint spacers

having a thickness whereby said joint spacers are operable to extend a joint space between a femoral head and an acetabulum to thereby tension a ligamentum teres femoris.

Application No. 09/994,492
Amendment dated June 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2003

Claim 9 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 8, wherein said thickness is about 31 millimeters.

Claim 10 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 8, wherein said head has a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint.

Claim 11 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 10, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head.

Claim 12 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 10, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending from said head in a direction about 30° away from said radius of curvature toward a concave surface of said head.

Claim 13 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 8, wherein said blade is recessed from said joint spacers.

Claim 14 (original): A ligament cutter, comprising:

a cylindrical handle having grip means for facilitating a firm grip of the ligament cutter;

Application No. 09/994,492
Amendment dated June 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2003

an extension connected to said handle, said extension tapering away from said handle; and

a head connected to said extension, said head having a distal end with a pair of joint spacers connected thereto, said blade spanning said joint spacers, said joint spacers having a thickness which is greater than a thickness of said blade, wherein said head has a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint;

wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head;

wherein said blade is recessed from said joint spacers.

Claim 15 (original): A ligament cutter, comprising:

a handle;

a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle; and

a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers, wherein said blade is recessed from said joint spacers.

Claim 16 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 15, wherein said head has a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint.

Application No. 09/994,492
Amendment dated June 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2003

Claim 17 (currently amended): The ligament cutter of Claim ~~10~~ 15, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head.

Claim 18 (original): The ligament cutter of Claim 15, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending from said head in a direction about 30° away from said radius of curvature toward a concave surface of said head.

Claim 19 (new): A ligament cutter, comprising:

a handle;

a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle; and

a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers.

Claim 20 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 19, wherein said blade is recessed from said joint spacers.

Claim 21 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 19, wherein said head has a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint.

Application No. 09/994,492
Amendment dated June 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2003

Claim 22 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 19, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head.

Claim 23 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 19, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending from said head in a direction about 30° away from said radius of curvature toward a concave surface of said head.

Claim 24 (new): A ligament cutter, comprising:

a handle;

a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle; and

a joint spacer connected to said head and extending distally from said distal end of said head.

Claim 25 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 24, wherein said head has a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball-and-socket joint.

Claim 26 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 24, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending substantially radially from said head.

Application No. 09/994,492
Amendment dated June 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2003

Claim 27 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 24, wherein said handle is connected to said head via an extension, said extension extending from said head in a direction about 30° away from said radius of curvature toward a concave surface of said head.

Claim 28 (new): A ligament cutter, comprising:

a handle;

a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle, said head having a curvature in a plane transverse to the blade.

Claim 29 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 28, wherein said plane is perpendicular to said blade.

Claim 30 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 28, wherein said curvature substantially matches the curvature of a femoral head.

Claim 31 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 28, further comprising:

spacer means connected to said head for extending a spacing between a pair of bones forming a joint and thereby tensioning a ligament joining said pair of bones, said blade recessed from said spacer means.

Application No. 09/994,492
Amendment dated June 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2003

Claim 32 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 31, wherein said spacer means comprises a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers, said joint spacers having a thickness whereby said joint spacers are operable to extend a joint space between a femoral head and an acetabulum to thereby tension a ligamentum teres femoris.

Claim 33 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 30, wherein said blade is recessed from said spacer means.

Claim 34 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 28, further comprising:
a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers.

Claim 35 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 34, wherein said blade is recessed from said joint spacers.

Claim 36 (new): A ligament cutter, comprising:
a handle;
a head having a distal end with a blade, said head connected to said handle, said head having a radius of curvature whereby said head can be positioned intermediate a ball and a socket of a ball and socket joint.

Application No. 09/994,492
Amendment dated June 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2003

Claim 37 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 36, wherein said curvature substantially matches the curvature of a femoral head.

Claim 38 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 36, further comprising:

spacer means connected to said head for extending a spacing between a pair of bones forming a joint and thereby tensioning a ligament joining said pair of bones, said blade recessed from said spacer means.

Claim 39 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 38, wherein said spacer means comprises a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers, said joint spacers having a thickness whereby said joint spacers are operable to extend a joint space between a femoral head and an acetabulum to thereby tension a ligamentum teres femoris.

Claim 40 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 38, wherein said blade is recessed from said spacer means.

Claim 41 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 36, further comprising:

a pair of joint spacers, said blade spanning said joint spacers.

Application No. 09/994,492
Amendment dated June 9, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 7, 2003

Claim 42 (new): The ligament cutter of Claim 41, wherein said blade is recessed from said joint
spacers.